

THE LION'S ROAR

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF MILWAUKEE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Eight Days of Lights at MJDS

Chanukah Pajamakkah

by **Andrew Kazan**

On Thursday, Dec. 18 at 6:30 PM, the junior and senior kindergarteners and their families enjoyed a "Chanukah Pajamakkah." They kicked off the program by singing Chanukah songs in the Beit Midrash, followed by a magic show. The participants then went back to the kindergarten classroom and lit menorahs and ate Chanukah treats.

All of this happened while the junior and senior kindergarteners were in their pajamas. Gev. Milrud came up with this wonderful idea. When asked why MJDS had this fun program, Geveret Voras said, "It's just a fun kindergarten experience."



Fifth
Graders
build Giant
Chanukiah

by **Talia Trevino**

The fifth graders made a giant chanukiah in their Jewish Studies class with Gev. Altman-Shafer. She was in a meeting when other teachers mentioned that it would be a good idea to have a big chanukiah so children in the back of the room would be able to see.

"It was a wonderful project," said Gev. Altman-Shafer. "I'm not sure if we will keep this chanukiah or make a new one next year.

Having the lower school together for candle lighting every afternoon has been a wonderful way to build community. I am grateful to Gev. Kleiman for her idea of lighting it together."

The base of the chanukiah is made of cardboard bricks painted white, and the branches are Duplo Legos glued together. Origami cubes are attached to the bricks and spell MJDS. When it was all finished the students attached candles to the top.

"I liked it. It was a really good project because everyone worked together," said Micah. There is even a video about how the students made it. To enjoy the video, go to <https://vimeo.com/115007870>



The kindergarten staff enjoyed the Chanukah Pajamakkah.

Chanukah Celebrated in Many Ways

By Ben Kleiman and Adin Herber

Chanukah is the Jewish holiday celebrating the miracle of the oil. Many years ago the Maccabees were being attacked by the Greeks. The Maccabees were low in the oil that they needed to light their lamps. They had very little oil left. Fortunately, the oil lasted for eight days. It was a miracle!

Here at MJDS, we embrace this holiday. We spoke with several members of the MJDS community about how they celebrate Chanukah.

Eighth grader Justin Sinykin's family always sings songs, and all of his siblings and parents light their own menorahs. Rabbi Steigmann's kids also light their own menorahs. Adon Blumin's family has only one menorah. They have been lighting the same menorah for fifteen years!

Some families watch all the candles burn down in the dark or decorate their house with old drawings from their families like the Steigmanns. Many families spend Chanukah with other families.

Elan Ish-Shalom, in the fifth grade, said that every night his family plays dreidel, lights multiple menorahs, and sometimes celebrates with friends. All seven family members get together to sing the blessings and eat *sufganiyot* and latkes. His father also Skypes with family members from Israel.

Chanukah can be spent in many ways: just your family or many families; one menorah or many menorahs. There are many ways to celebrate this festival of lights. We hope you enjoyed yours!



Susie Fono, a Holocaust Survivor, Speaks to Eighth Grade

by Justin Sinykin

"Be nice to everyone you meet because you never know when it will make a difference," said Holocaust survivor Mrs. Susie Fono. This was very true for Mrs. Fono's family because it ended up saving their lives in the Holocaust. Mrs. Fono spoke to the eighth graders last week about her family's experiences in the Holocaust. She told the eighth grade students many stories about her life.

Mrs. Fono was born in Hungary. She and her family were very fortunate that they were able to stay in apartments that were under the protection of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish ambassador who saved many Jews. The apartment owners were always nice to her mother. Those apartments were so crowded, but as time went on, the Nazis began deporting the Jews.

One day when the Nazis came to her apartment building to deport more Jews, one of the local men helping the Nazis recognized Mrs. Fono's mother because he used to

deliver coal regularly to their home. He told the Nazis that he was going to come back for them. He saved their lives because he was always treated with respect and kindness by Mrs. Fono's parents. Because of this, most of Mrs. Fono's family survived the Holocaust.

The eighth grade Jewish Studies teacher, Gev. Herman said, "We are so fortunate and appreciative that Susie Fono came to speak to our eighth grade. She shared a wonderful PowerPoint presentation of slides of her family during the Holocaust, and she spoke about what it felt like to be a young Jewish girl hiding from the Nazis. I know that our students will always remember hearing firsthand experiences from the Holocaust and will have a better understanding of how precious life is and how important our families are in our lives."



Phones Should be Permitted in School

By Sadie Wolfe

A phone is a great way to connect with the outside world. Phones and iPods should be allowed at school for middle school students. The students could use their phones or iPods when the teacher says it is okay or when there is free time. Using an iPod or phone at school will help students connect to the outside world, listen to music and become more responsible.

When using your phone at school, you can stay connected with what is happening around you. News that is happening right now is constantly being posted on websites. Having your phone in school can help you stay up to date.

Listening to music is one way to stay focused while working or studying. "It really depends on the individual. Some students can study effectively with music playing, while others are distracted by any outside stimulus," says Elizabeth Axford, an online instructor in the University of Phoenix College of Humanities and Sciences. Listening to music while doing homework can brighten your day and help you get your work done.

Lastly, allowing phones in middle school will prepare the students to use their phones wisely when they get to high school. Shorewood and Nicolet High Schools allow phones and iPods at school. I asked a freshman at Shorewood High School when she can use her phone. She said it really depends on the teachers' rules. If we at MJDS have the advantage of using our phones, we will learn when to use our phones and when not to. This will help us get ready for high school.

I interviewed many people in the middle school, and they all said they would use their phones responsibly during *hafsakah* or study hall. Having the opportunity to use your phone or iPod is a good idea. Phones and iPods can be a help, not a distraction. Why not use this "helper" at school?

Ask the Eighth

Ask the Eighth: Homework, Relaxing, and Social Life?

By Aviva Levin

Dear Eighth Grader,

In middle school, we get so much homework, and it can be very time consuming. When I get home, I also want to be able to relax, watch TV, have a snack, be social, or participate in after-school activities. How can I organize my time to balance both my school and social life?

A Typical Middle Schooler

Dear Typical Middle Schooler:

You need a schedule. Having a designated time for everything will allow you to fall into the natural routine of doing homework then watching TV, after having some dinner and perhaps after getting some social time. "The first thing that you should always get done is your homework; don't procrastinate," is what the very well organized Adon Blumin says.

Also, creating an incentive for yourself after completing a hard assignment, like some TV time,

is what Megan Gendelman likes to do in order to motivate herself. Adon Hinkens says that when he writes out everything that needs to be done, even social gatherings, it helps him stay on schedule with a checklist. Getting rid of any distractions will help your complete homework, too. So when it's homework time, put your phone on mute, and go somewhere nice and quiet to finish faster. Nina Iskandarsjach says that prioritizing your assignments will help you get the most important work completed on time.

Being in middle school is challenging, with loads more homework, but it is still important to get everything done. Sometimes you are going to have to sacrifice some relaxation time for extra assignments, but in the grand scheme of things, it is the right decision. Organizing your time to fit everything necessary and extra is possible; all you need is a little organization and a few healthy habits. As Adon Ross's famous motto says, "Organization is the key to school success."

Grades Learn From New Themes

By Megan Gendelman



We all try to live by moral Jewish values. This year at MJDS, each of the grades has a theme, which relates to one of those values and is relevant to that grade. Rabbi Steigmann is on a committee that is planning this program. This new project is designed to help students realize in what ways Judaism is connected to us now.

כולנו מנסים לחיות לפי ערכים מוסריים יהודיים. השנה הזאת בבית ספר שלנו, יש לכל כיתה נושא, שאולי זה כמו ערכים, וזה משהו שרלוונטי לכיתה. הרב סטייגמן עוזר עם זה. אנחנו עושים את הפרויקט הזה כי זה עוזר לתלמידים בבית הספר להבין איך יהדות קשור לנו כאשיו.

"Our Judaism does not just teach us about the Torah, the laws, the Kashrut; it also teaches us about how we interact with each other and how we interact with the world," Rabbi Steigmann explains. "So we wanted to create themes for each grade that would be age-appropriate and that would connect everything that we do in Judaism."

Rabbi Steigmann also mentioned that MJDS is transitioning to more student-owned learning and that the themes will connect to that. "The student-owned learning projects can then begin to center on those themes. And the themes are also intended to be universal enough that they overlap with the general and secular studies topics."

Some examples of the themes are: senior kindergarden: "Wonder" (פלא); when you are five or six years old, you are in complete awe of the world, and you are wondering about everything. First grade: "Mindfulness" (קונה); once you are full of wonder of the world, you need to be mindful of the people and places around you to understand it all. Seventh grade: "Tikkun Olam" (תיקון עולם); in seventh grade, students participate in the Voice of the Children charity project and raise lots of money to help children in different parts of the world every year. Eighth grade: "Journeys" (מסע); in eighth grade there are lots of journeys that students take: the bike trip, the Israel trip, and ending their MJDS journey.

The other themes are: junior kindergarden: "Kindness" (חסד); second grade: "Community" (קהילה); third grade: "Dignity" (כבוד); fourth grade: "Origins" (דע מאין באת); fifth grade: "Holiness" (קדושה); and sixth grade: "Accountability and Partnership" (ערביות).

Each grade has created a banner with its theme on it and some drawings that the students in that grade think represent their theme. All of the banners are hung on the walls outside the Beit Midrash, and according to Rabbi Steigmann, at some point, all of the grades will use sticky notes to write about what they think of when they look at a different theme and then put the sticky notes on that theme's banner.

Eighth Grade is Going "Home" to Israel

by David Rosengarten

In 2008 the eighth graders from Milwaukee Jewish Day School went to Israel for the first time. Since then, the graduating class has gone every year.

This year the eighth grade will leave on May 17. The teachers accompanying the class will be Gov. Rosengarten and Adon Katz. Adon Katz has led the trip every year, but this will be Gov. Rosengarten's first time as a chaperone.

This year, the class will visit Jerusalem, Masada, the Dead Sea, and Sovev Kinneret. They will be gone for almost two weeks. Last year the eighth grade spent one night with Israeli students and their families. Many former students say it was one of the best experiences they ever had. This year the Israel trip should be one of the best ones yet!

3D Printer Arrives

by **Elan Graupe**

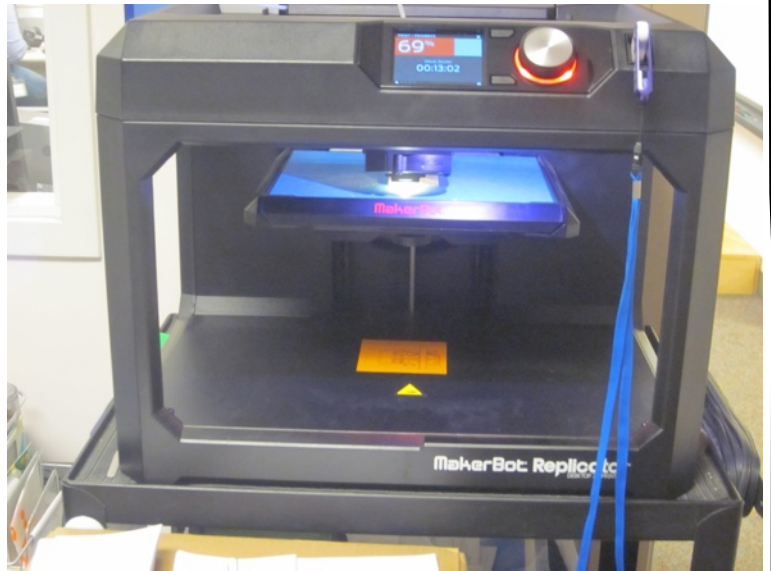
MJDS has just purchased a 3D printer this fall. Since a 3D printer is a new piece of technology, it will take some getting used to. Basically, a 3D printer layers plastic many times to form a 3D object. Unlike a regular printer, it can be used to make replacements for things or just to make small plastic toys.

"I believe the 3D printer will provide another learning opportunity and creative outlet for our students," wrote Gev. Weisz, the technology administrator at MJDS. It will teach students how to model things on the computer. Some students have even started using the 3D printer. Right now, the fourth graders have been working on modeling key chains. The fifth graders will also be doing a project later this year. The 3D printer will be used primarily for students in fourth grade and up.

The 3D printer is still new to our school. Because it is cutting edge technology, Gev. Weisz thought that we should have one in our school. MJDS is still determining the use of the printer because it is such a new thing. Hopefully, the 3D printer will become more and more useful after more students have a chance to use it and figure out how it works.

The 3D printer can be used to make many things, such as toys like keychains and other things that can be used to fix or improve something else. Users can either download things off of a website or make them using special 3D modeling programs. This will allow students to print an unlimited amount of things.

The 3D printer will be something that will change MJDS. Its users can print almost anything from it. And most importantly of all, "Designing an item for the 3D printer will teach students how to do computer aided designing, which will be important skills to have in the future," said Gev Weisz.



VOTC Update: What Happened to the Money?

by **Nathan Hernandez**

Last year's seventh graders, the current eighth graders, raised almost \$25,000 for Voice of the Children! This non-profit organization was started in 2009 by Head of School Adon King, who used to be the seventh grade social studies teacher. Every year the seventh grade raises money for organizations that help kids around the world. But the work doesn't stop in seventh grade.

Last year the seventh graders learned about Africa. They set a goal of raising \$9,000 to help the kids in Africa. With the help of Gev. Cullinan, the digital and media marketing specialist at MJDS, the students made videos about the problems kids in Africa face daily, like malnutrition, child labor, disease, and lack of shelter. Mr. Dan Sinykin generously donated blankets that the students sold. Adon Hinkens also sold items that the students collected on eBay.

Over the course of the year, the class received a couple of anonymous donations for over

\$1,000 each, which helped them reach their goal of \$9,000. Another anonymous donor matched the money, so by the end of the year VOTC had \$25,000 to donate to an organization.

Adon Hinkens, advisor to VOTC, said, "I am very proud of what they did because they raised the most money out of all the previous grades."

The journey for those seventh graders didn't stop there. Now in eighth grade, the students decided to donate \$20,000 to Action Against Hunger and \$5,000 to Books for Africa. In a Skype interview, Ryan Head, from Action Against Hunger, said that they would use the money to educate people about Ebola. The students also wrote letters to the kids that Books for Africa will help.

The seventh graders this year are learning about Africa and the act of philanthropy. They have only started their journey to give voices to the children of the world.

Jeff and Tommy Keep MJDS Running

by Blair Wales

Who are the men behind all of the electrical, plumbing, and piping for MJDS, Hillel Academy, and Jewish Beginnings? Their names are Jeff Moga and Tommy Rice, just known as Tommy and Jeff. Tommy works in maintenance for our building, and Jeff is the lead mechanic for the North building, our building. He takes care of the physical plant, which includes our heating, cooling, and mechanical systems. Jeff also takes work requests from all three schools, as well as the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, which employs him.

Jeff said, "I was trained in the trades: plumbing, electrical, and air conditioning/heating/ventilating." He was also a steamfitter, someone who installs pipe systems that move steam under high pressure, before this job.

Jeff has worked for the Milwaukee Jewish Federation for 31 years! Tommy has worked at this school for 29 years. Jeff's number one hobby is collecting old vehicles; he has two right now. Drawing and working on his house are also hobbies Jeff enjoys. They both love the kids. Mr. Moga likes his job because he knows what he is doing, he likes mechanics and problem solving, and he likes us, the people whom he is privileged to help.



Selfie of the week!

Send yours to lionsroar@mjds.org

Little Libraries Share Books

by Zach Cohen

"Little Free Library": A library the size of a big birdhouse that anybody can access anytime. People can borrow books or put books into it for others to borrow.

This year at MJDS, Jim Salinsky, an MJDS parent and an *omanut* woodworking teacher, will lead family teams to create their own neighborhood Little Free Libraries. The reason they are doing this is to promote literacy and the love of reading while building a sense of community.

Little Free Libraries all started in 2009 in Hudson, Wisconsin when a teacher put up a tiny box that looked like a house and filled it with books and a sign up that said "Free books."

When asked what she thinks about this project, Gev. Porat responded, "I think it is a nice way to work on something together and build a sense of community, not just working with each other but getting to know each other."

I asked Mr. Salinsky how this will create a community, and he answered, "There will be a sense of community because people will build together, and also it encourages people to read."

Improvements Suggested for MS Schedule

by Steven Dorf and Evan Kleiner

"Ring! Gotta get to class in three minutes. Ring! Oh, no, I'm late! That's so unfair; there's not enough time to get to class." Does this sound like you, trying to manage on a typical MJDS middle school day? Some sources say that there may be some changes in the schedule next year. What would they like to see?

Adon King is the head of the school. He thinks we have to jump around too much from class to class. He feels we should have longer, fewer classes, and we should get a longer transition in between classes. He also thinks we should have more physical activity and that we should get a choice period, a class where you can do your own thing.

Blair Wales, an eighth grade student at MJDS, thinks that there should be less *tefillah* and more study halls. She also thinks lunches should be longer. Blair does like that each class is 45 minutes. She also likes that *omanut* is our last period.

David Rosengarten, an eight grade student, said he would change the schedule if he could. "I would like more time for lunch and *hafsakah* on Friday," said David. He also wants to get rid of math study hall. He likes the class lengths during the day.

Gev. Wolfson, a sixth grade English teacher and an eight grade literature teacher, thinks that lunch should be earlier. She also thinks there should be more time for students to meet with teachers. She thinks that English and literature should have a combined, longer class. According to Gev. Wolfson, "I like that the kids have a break in the morning with *hafsakah* and that *omanut* and study hall are at the end of the day."

Taylor Silverstein is a seventh grade student. He thinks there should be more study halls. "I think study hall should be every other day," said Taylor. He also thinks *hafsakah* should be 15 minutes longer. Taylor like how easy the schedule is to remember. He also likes the Friday dismissal and the *omanut* program.

Student Council Makes Plans for Fun Year

by Nesya Graupe

Sometimes at school, it feels like the students' voices aren't heard. Teachers and staff seem to make all of the decisions and are in charge of everything. Student Council is one of the few opportunities where students can make their voices heard and actually have a say in decisions!

At the beginning of each year, students write speeches and run for different offices. They meet together every Tuesday during lunch to discuss issues and plan fun activities like snack cart, pajama day, and this year a secret *chaver* (friend) project where students, if they choose, can give anonymous gifts to another student.

Not only does Student Council create activities, they also organize charity projects. So far, they have raised money for breast cancer, collected food for the PBJ challenge, and have some ideas about raising money for the IDF, through penny wars or sports competitions.

Every Tuesday through Thursday during *hafsakah*, Student Council has a snack cart where

they sell different snacks, ranging from muffins to Gardettos, and school supplies. Occasionally they have a candy bar day where candy bars are available for purchase for \$1.

Gev. Weisz is one of the advisors, along with Gev. Wright. After being an advisor for over 10 years, she says, "I love helping the students perform *tzedakah* projects and plan fun activities for the middle school. It's always exciting to see how things change from year to year."

Megan Gendelman, Student Council president, says, "Be ready for some fun activities! This year we are doing a teacher competition to raise money. Whichever teacher gets the most money in their jar has to perform an agreed upon challenge." If you have any questions or suggestions, be sure to put them in the suggestions box above her locker, #321.

"Third time pays for all": Third Hobbit Film Released

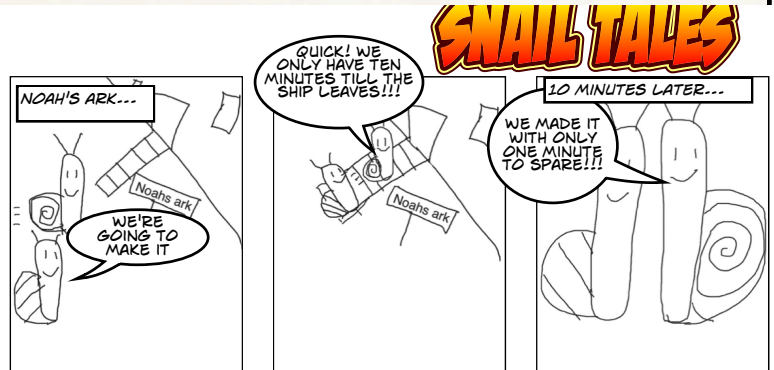
by **Liam Gray**

Another year has gone by, and the final chapter in the movie series based on J.R.R Tolkien's *The Hobbit* has arrived. The third movie continues the adventure of Bilbo Baggins and the dwarves of Erebor as they defend the mountain and its treasure from the people of Lake Town and the elves of Mirkwood. This movie also has the added bonus of revealing the final part of Gandalf's journey into Dol Goldur.

The entire movie was filmed in New Zealand. Producer/director Peter Jackson also has revealed that he filmed the movies at 48 FPS (frames per second) instead of the regular 24 FPS for better viewing and visual graphics. The budget for all three of *The Hobbit* movies was \$750 million, which, if split into three, makes these the most expensive movies ever made.

Along with all of the new actors in *The Hobbit* trilogy, Ian McKellen as Gandalf, Ian Holm as the older Bilbo, and Christopher Lee as Saruman the White return to play the same roles that they played in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. With the past successes of *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* movies and from the trailers, I have no doubt this movie will be fantastic.

The seventh grade has just finished reading *The Hobbit*, and the eighth graders read it last year. Both grades are seeing the movie before winter break, and I believe that all of them are as excited as I am.



Selfie of the Week #2! Send yours to lionsroar@mjds.org

The Lion's Roar

is written and edited by the eighth graders at
Milwaukee Jewish Day School

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